

Amendments to the Specification:**Please amend paragraph [0009] as follows:**

[0009] Recently semiconductor switches have been developed in accordance with the progress of power electronics, and there have been designed semiconductor switches which can turn-on and turn-off a large current under a high voltage. However, a semiconductor switch has a lower withstand voltage and could not be substituted for the thyatron. A switch is composed of a series circuit of a number of semiconductor switches and a necessary circuit voltage is ~~sheared~~shared by these semiconductor switches. In order to turn-on simultaneously the semiconductor switches connected in series, it is necessary to provide special gate driving circuits. Furthermore, a high voltage is applied between the gate driving circuits, and therefore gate power sources and gate control signals have to be isolated from each other. In general, a remarkable advantage could not be attained by only replacing the thyatron by a series circuit of semiconductor switches.

Please amend the subheading on page 3 as follows:**~~Summary~~ Summary of the Invention****Please amend paragraph [0027] as follows:**

[0027] As stated above, when a plurality of the controllable semiconductor switching elements, in the present embodiment the four static induction thyristors 25-1~25-4 are connected in series, these semiconductor switching elements require respective gate driving circuits independently. Since the high voltage (maximum voltage is V_p) is applied between respective gate driving circuits, a high withstand voltage isolation has to be provided between voltage source and control signals for these gate driving circuits. This results in an increase in size and cost of the circuit as well as in a decrease in reliability. In order to ~~shear~~share the high voltage by the semiconductor switching elements equally, it is necessary to turn-on and turn-off these

semiconductor switching elements abruptly. To this end, gate signals should be applied to the semiconductor switching elements simultaneously in a very precise manner. This requires a highly developed technique.